



STATE OF TENNESSEE  
**TENNESSEE COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

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**BUDGET AND DATA COMMITTEE**

TCCY Conference Room  
Andrew Johnson Tower, Ninth Floor  
July 12, 2007  
12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

Committee Members Present

Jim Ford, Chair  
Natasha Blackshear  
Dennis Clark  
Tim Goldsmith  
Marti Herndon  
Susan Lawless-Glassman  
Carlton Lewis  
Dwight Stokes  
Nancy Williams  
Cindy Durham

Committee Members Absent

Trudy Hughes  
Charles Hutchins  
Jo Ann Yates

Guests

Maureen Abbey  
Allen Staley  
Carol White

Staff Members Present

Linda O'Neal  
Pam Brown  
Fay Delk  
Bill Latimer  
Steve Petty  
Debrah Stafford  
Emel Eff  
Zaneria Whitfield

Ford called the meeting to order at 12:40 p.m. Delk called roll, and a quorum was present.

I. Approval of May Minutes

**IT WAS MOVED (LEWIS) AND SECONDED (STOKES) TO APPROVE THE MAY BUDGET AND DATA COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES. UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

II. TCCY Media Coverage Update – Pam Brown

Brown summarized the report included in the Committee handouts. She noted the *Blueprint* was released June 26, so it was too early for us to tell about the coverage. Delk circulated an editorial page package from the *Tennessean* and two newspaper articles as

examples of the coverage. Brown went over the statistical breakdown of the coverage and media contacts. She noted that the report included a trend-line graphic showing changes in coverage. Herndon reported a percentage error.

### III. The Advocate Update – Delk

Delk said the last edition of *The Advocate* was released at the end of June. We had planned to release a newsletter on children in state custody, but a decision was made to delay the newsletter until after the national Data Book release, which also deals with permanence. Instead, the last newsletter of the fiscal year was used as a vehicle to distribute a summary of the *Blueprint*. It also included information about legislative changes that will help implement some of these recommendations. Distribution of the newsletter to Dwight Lewis at the *Tennessean*, resulted in a column about DMC. The newsletter on health disparities released earlier resulted in interest from some new people. Delk asked for recommendations for topics for upcoming newsletters.

### IV. Web Stats – Pam Brown

Brown presented a report, with pie charts, showing statistics for April, May and June and a summary for the entire year. Brown pointed out the web stats were reflective of what is going on with TCCY. During June when there was more activity with the Legislative ListServe, Legislative jumped up to fourth in the pie chart, and in April and May juvenile justice was tied for third during the time for submission of grant applications. The yearlong statistics show usage varies substantially from month to month. Ford questioned the number of hits, and Brown responded there has been a fairly dramatic growth from earlier years.

Brown reported Eff had attempted to get information about access to Tennessee data from the Casey Foundation's CLIK's site, but the website had been down for two months due to renovation. When they get it back up, we will be able to report access to Tennessee state data from the national website.

Ford suggested not reporting activity with the Compilation on Children, Youth and Families on a separate graphic, since it is such a big demand item.

### V. KIDS COUNT: The State of the Child Release – Pam Brown

Ford stated his response to the book was that we still have a lot of work to do. The book was released on June 26. O'Neal did the largest amount of work talking with media. O'Neal reported we did not get as much coverage, perhaps because it was not about rankings, but we have received a lot of positive feedback from professionals on it as a policy piece. One Nashville television station did a story without interviewing us. We had a pretty good story in the Chattanooga newspaper. We had a story in the Johnson City Press, followed by an editorial, and this weekend by another editorial. O'Neal reported contacting Dwight Lewis, former Making KIDS COUNT media award winner, and asking about coverage on the editorial page. He is the weekend editor and does an editorial column. A whole page of the *Tennessean* on June 28 was devoted to the quality

of life for children in Tennessee, including columns by O'Neal, Joyce Searcy, Director of Bethlehem Centers, and Charlotte Bryson, Director of Tennessee Voices for Children. It also had an editorial with quotes from Judge Betty Adams Green. While we did not get the number of news stories we would like, we did get good editorial coverage. Delk pointed out the solutions stories we want are not the disaster stories that garner lots of coverage. The stories she circulated focused on the fact that there are solutions and we can do better. Delk said she expected the clipping service has not received all the articles.

VI. National KIDS COUNT Data Book Release – Pam Brown

Brown reported the KIDS COUNT national release was delayed until July 25. We have completed the last of the planning conference calls with the Casey Foundation. O'Neal will be recording sound bite feeds for the media. There will be video sound bites with Laura Beavers recorded so television stations can download them, and the press release is completed to go out with the press packets from the Casey Foundation. Although we will not have the books until after the release, we will send the Tennessee pages with the book. O'Neal reported we would probably do a press conference on permanency with young adults who had been in foster care.

VII. Budget Update – Linda O'Neal and Maureen Abbey

O'Neal commended Abbey for the work she has done for TCCY over the past year and a half, but she will now be turning over the work to Carol White and Allen Staley. They are still working on closing the 2006-2007 fiscal year. O'Neal reported we will meet the state's reversion target. We have been identifying funding we can use appropriately to purchase equipment. O'Neal reported we had sufficient funding to replace computers sooner and to purchase computers for juvenile courts. At the sunset hearing the legislators had a lot of questions about the court system data. Abbey reported that Latimer is working with the computer vender to deploy computers in the first quarter for all 95 counties. We are using interest money we earned on JABG and some state money to purchase software and printers before the end of the fiscal year.

Abbey reported the budget had been cleaned up to reflect current state policy. A line item for Equipment traditionally was budgeted \$20,000. However, when the state changed the definition of equipment to things costing more than \$5,000, our need for purchases that qualify dropped.

Abbey reported next year's budget will be reduced because JABG grants and some of the other grants have been reduced. The budget submitted reflects adjustments to reduce the budget by \$1,546,000 next year. The current budget appears to be under spent, but that is because we did not have as much grant money as originally budgeted. The budget will continue to be cleaned up to reflect reductions in federal money. We left in more money than we will probably spend in order to have the authority in case it is needed if federal funding increases. Salary and benefits amounts for a budget officer will be moved to below the line and used to pay for shared services.

VIII. Shared Services Update – Linda O’Neal

The handouts included a sheet showing Shared Services contacts and responsibilities. We have a contract with Shared Services for more money than our previous contract with F&A because Vickie Morgan is no longer on our payroll. She is now working for Shared Services. The contract still costs less than the fiscal officer/accounting director position and the accounting technician position. John Nixson is still with us performing some accounting-related functions here and serves some liaison role with Shared Services. We are not participating in Shared Services for human resources. We may consider participating in human resources if staff and conditions change.

O’Neal said we had a positive working relationship with Carol White, Director of Shared Services, and Allen Staley, the Operations Director. We began working with them in the Spring. They worked with us to get departmental grant authority to make it easier for us to get the grants and contracts in place and they developed the allocation for the reimbursement account. We have completed all paperwork for Staley to serve as our Fiscal Officer. It has been a constructive process. O’Neal serves on the Shared Services Oversight Board, as does the director of the other agency participating in Shared Services, as well as representatives from General Services, Finance and Administration and Human Resources (previously Personnel) because they are the primary functions. We share procurement duties with Shared Services as the most appropriate and efficient strategy for carrying out this function. We have been pleased with the process.

White said they appreciate the opportunity to serve and appreciate Abbey and all the work she did. They are working to do what TCCY asks them to do but continue to consult with Abbey. They have been able to work closely for a seamless transition. They are working with TCCY staff to make sure internal controls are in place. They requested feedback on how things could function better. White commended O’Neal for leading the development of a resource for all state agencies. Shared Services is recruiting actively and working to get all systems in place and effective so current customers will recommend them. Abbey reminded the Committee that the state is replacing old systems of accounting and human resources with a coordinated system called ERP. They anticipate several small departments will come into Shared Services in the next 12 months as ERP goes live and individual tasks become more complicated and specialized. Rapid and clear communication is necessary to make Shared Services work.

O’Neal reported other agencies have different needs, but as they have turnover, other agencies will learn they have the same problem we had finding staff with the skills and experience needed. She commended Shared Services for allowing agencies to contract for what they need.

IX. TCCY Budget Recommendations to the Governor (ACTION) – Linda O’Neal

Draft recommendations were e-mailed to the Committee. O’Neal reported TCCY has the statutory responsibility to make budget recommendations, but if we wait for the appropriations bill, it is too late in the process to have as much impact. For many years we have submitted budget recommendations in the summer before the budget process,

including submission of improvement requests by all state departments. The Comptroller's Office has accepted this as fulfilling the statutory requirement. The budget cover letter and recommendations point out positive things, and try to identify critical issues that need to be addressed.

The Commission has asked for an improvement in early childhood education and pre-K programs throughout multiple administrations. This year there is new emphasis on the child care reimbursement rate. It has become critical to increase these rates that currently range from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 40<sup>th</sup> percentiles, depending on type and location of care. Herndon reported the low rates were reducing availability of child care. O'Neal stated they need to increase these rates before they add more money to pre-K because it is becoming problematic for child care resources under the current rate.

Recommendations also focused on the legislation calling for more evidence-based programs and the need for more coordinated, collaborative mental health services for children. Other issues in the accompanying report suggested a review of home-visiting programs; the need to evaluate the multi-response system or child protective services; need to increase Families First grants; need to improve legal representation for children in the juvenile court, perhaps with a public guardian program; more support for higher education, since that is where we get our work force; and other recommendations.

The primary differences from earlier years' recommendations were a stronger emphasis on the increase in child-care reimbursements, the recommendation for the overview of home visiting programs, more emphasis on evidence-based programs and public guardian programs.

The recommendations go to the Governor; commissioners of key departments; Tam Gordon in the Governor's office; Bill Bradley, budget director in F&A; a number of legislators; top staff at the Administrative Office of the Courts; and the Higher Education Commission.

**IT WAS MOVED (HERDON) AND SECONDED (LAWLESS-GLASSMAN) TO APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATION. UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED.**

X. TCCY Budget Improvement Request (ACTION) – Linda O'Neal

TCCY will be working with White and Staley on the budget request to be submitted to F&A by October 1. The only improvement item O'Neal anticipated requesting is \$75,000 for five additional CASA programs. TCCY received funding in this year's budget for an assistant director, the first year we had requested it. We did not ask for CASA money in the budget request because the improvement item we received in the 2006-2007 budget covered all the programs existing at that time. However, at our Senate budget hearing one of the senators added an amendment with funds for up to 10 additional CASA programs. We worked with House members to get 37 signatures on an amendment to add up to \$150,000 to the budget. The General Assembly included it in its budget. Because of continued interest in counties in developing programs and in the Legislature, we are asking for more funds for CASA.

**IT WAS MOVED (GOLDSMITH) AND SECONDED (LEWIS) TO RECOMMEND THE BUDGET REQUEST. UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

XI. CASA Expansion Funding Plan (ACTION) – Linda O’Neal

O’Neal discussed the need for requirements for programs receiving the \$150,000 in new CASA funding. Requirement recommendations sent to Committee members included four items, and O’Neal suggested an additional one. As originally recommended, in order to get new funding, the program needed to:

1. Be incorporated as a nonprofit;
2. Have received or applied for a 501(c)3 tax-exempt status;
3. Have an executive director in place;
4. Submit a budget for the use of the \$150,000;

O’Neal suggested an additional requirement:

5. Programs be in compliance with the National CASA standards.

O’Neal said within a month we should have as many as five counties very close to meeting all requirements. More than five additional counties are in various stages of development.

O’Neal asked the Commission to set criteria for funding so TCCY can proceed with contracts for new programs. Goldsmith asked about the ability of programs to become operational for funding and timeframes for outcomes. O’Neal stated the need to become operational no later than March 2008 to meet the criteria. O’Neal reported she will be meeting with all the CASA directors August 3, 2007 and will be sharing the expectations with them.

**IT WAS MOVED (BLACKSHEAR) AND SECONDED (LAWLESS-GLASSMAN) TO APPROVE THE FIVE CRITERIA FOR FUNDING NEW CASA PROGRAMS. UNANIMOUSLY PASSED.**

XII. Other Business

Ford adjourned the meeting at 1:51 p.m.

Minutes Submitted by:

Minutes Approved by:

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Pam Brown, Director KIDS COUNT

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Jim Ford, Chair

